



News Release From . . .

## **Congressman Rodney Alexander** 5<sup>th</sup> Congressional District of Louisiana

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### **ALEXANDER INCREASES FUNDING FOR OUACHITA/BLACK RIVER PROJECT TO \$13.887 MILLION**

#### **FUNDING INCREASE COMES DURING TIGHT BUDGET CRUNCH**

*Washington, D.C.* --U.S. Rep. Rodney Alexander, R-Quitman, has announced that funding for the Ouachita/Black River Navigation Project has been increased from \$8.5 million (President Bush's proposed budget) to \$10.4 million (in the House Conference Report) to \$13.887 Million, which will be used toward the Army Corps of Engineers Operation and Maintenance budget (House and Senate Conference Report.)

This news comes as a surprise to North Louisiana, considering the President's Budget was tight on projects with the Army Corps of Engineers.

The Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee confirmed that only an additional \$20 million had been available for nationwide projects back in May, and Alexander was able to claim nearly 10 percent of the funding increase for North Louisiana before the Conference Report was released. However, Alexander pushed the Energy and Water Conference Committee to increase funding to \$13.887 Million, which will enable the Vicksburg Corps of Engineers to make proper adjustments and keep the Ouachita River navigable.

**"I've made this one of my top priorities since I've been in Congress,"** Alexander said.

**"Last year, the Ouachita/Black project received a crushing blow when funding was cut from \$10 million to \$1.9 million. This year, \$8.5 million was listed in the President's Budget, and I'm proud to announce that the Ouachita/Black will gain over \$5 million extra. Chairman Hobson and his staff have greatly assisted North Louisiana by helping us to increase this funding. This project couldn't have happened without the guidance of Sen. David Vitter. Vitter and I both fought to restore this funding nearly two years ago. He understands the value of this project and what it means to North Louisiana."**

The Energy and Water Conference Committee approved the bill last night.

**"I know that Paul Revis and John Stringer have both fought tirelessly to see that this project is funded, so that the Vicksburg Corps of Engineers can keep the river navigable,"** Alexander said. **"So many businesses depend on navigable waters and infrastructure for commerce, and this project has the potential to greatly benefit North Louisiana's economy."**

Alexander represents 22 parishes in the 5th District, which covers over 1100 miles of waterways. **"I've made it a point to lobby our waterways in the 5th District with my other colleagues in the House,"** Alexander said.

**"By keeping our waterways navigable, we are making an investment in our state's infrastructure. This will benefit all of the oil companies and agriculture businesses that ship products on the Ouachita River. Hurricanes Katrina and Rita showed us that our waterway infrastructure is imperative to the nation's commerce and industry interests. We (Members of Congress) have got to keep fighting for infrastructure funding in Washington, D.C."**

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